



VISION 2020 FISCAL RESOURCES TASK GROUP
Meeting Minutes 7:30 PM 5_18_17

Senior Center First Floor Conference Room

ATTENDEES: Gordon Jamieson (Co-Chair), David Gabarino (Co-Chair), Brian Hasbrouck, Pete Howard (Secretary),

QUESTIONS FROM STEERING COMMITTEE: Each question was discussed and answered as follows:
What are the advantages to your group of being part of Vision 2020? We often get more attention because we are part of Vision 2020

What do you need from the Standing Committee? Help with recruiting. Publicity.

What energizes your volunteers? The sense that what we do helps the residents & the Town.

CITIZEN'S CORNER #3 The group reviewed the draft (Ref 1)

The group agreed that the scope was too big. It should be limited to the administration for which the Board of Selectmen are responsible. Also that that the diagram should include the titles of the leaders of each department rather than the department itself since it is through the department heads that the Town Manager directs Town administration. In addition, the chart should include the Comptroller. The next Citizen's Corner #4 will deal with the rest of the administration. Gordon will revise for review by email.

FALL PROJECTS: We hope to meet w/ the Treasurer, and the Deputy Town Manager w/ suggestion on how to improve the departments' home page w/ info from the various printed reports,

NEXT MEETING:6_15_17

Meetings monthly - 3rd Thursdays 7:30 PM - Usually in Senior Center

Ref 1 Citizen's Corner #3 Draft

Citizen's Corner 3 How Arlington's Government Functions

In the first article in this series, we provided some history and a general introduction to the Town's administrative framework and elected offices. In this installment, we'll focus on discussing how the different parts work together to provide the set of services that we enjoy as Arlington residents.

The general administrative principles of the Town (as defined by Massachusetts General Laws and Arlington's Town Bylaws) are set out in the Town Manager Act; wherein the Board of Selectmen recruit and appoint the Town's Chief Executive Officer, the Town Manager.

The Town Manager and his/her staff are responsible for the day-to-day administration and operation of the Town and its various departments, including the hiring of department heads. A professional hiring process is employed wherein the Manager and/or Department head work together with the Director of Human Services to identify and hire suitable candidates. Arlington is lucky to be able to have access to some of the best talent that the Commonwealth can offer.

The Manager's office is also responsible for the preparation of the Annual Report, Annual Financial Plan and the Town's budget. The budgetary planning process starts each fall and the completed budget is presented to the finance committee each January for review. As we noted last time, the finance committee's report is presented to the Annual Town Meeting which as the Town's Legislative body is responsible for approving all appropriation of funds.

In a similar fashion, the School Committee is responsible for the hiring of the Superintendent of Schools who together with his/her staff are responsible for the daily administration and operation of the School Department including the hiring of principals, department heads, etc. The School Committee and Superintendent prepare and execute on the School Department's budget.

Then there are the 'independent offices' (Treasurer and Town Collector, Town Clerk and Board of Assessors) that are responsible for the daily management, budgetary authority and most of the appointments within their departments. And To insure transparency and financial accountability, the Board of Selectmen also appoints the Town Comptroller who reports directly to the Board.

In addition to these departments, Arlington also has several Enterprise

Funds, which function as self-sustaining business enterprises within the town administrative structure. They are managed by the Town Manager and the department heads. The best known of these to most residents is the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund.

Lastly, Arlington has a host, well actually what seems like hundreds, of Committees and Commissions that are primarily volunteer staffed and are critical to helping Arlington function efficiently. Members are usually appointed by the Manager, subject to Board of Selectmen approval, and carry out a variety of essential tasks from historic preservation to cemetery oversight.

So if something piques your interest, there is likely a committee or commission addressing that issue. ~~So~~ Please consider getting involved. A great place to start is ~~reading~~ visiting the Town's website (www.arlingtonma.gov), reading ~~the~~ Annual Report, attending/watching Board of Selectmen or School Committee meetings, ~~or if you what to dive in head first, then plan on attending~~ ~~and enjoying our~~ Town Day ~~celebration~~ in the Fall.

~The Vision 2020 Fiscal Resources Task Group embraces and works to help the Town better realize the following Town goal: "We value Arlington's efficient delivery of public services providing for the common good. The benefits from these services and the responsibility of taxation will be equitably distributed among us. We will be known for our sound fiscal planning and for the thoughtful, open process by which realistic choices are made in our Town." We meet monthly and all are welcome to attend.



